

## *200 years of the Census in...*

# **WORCESTERSHIRE**

March 10<sup>th</sup> 2001 marks the bicentenary of the modern Census in Britain.

For 200 years the Census has been the cornerstone of planning in Britain. The first Census in 1801 was taken amidst fears that Britain's growing population might outstrip the country's supply of food. It asked 5 questions and counted 10 million people living in two million households. The 2001 Census, which takes place on the 29<sup>th</sup> April, will count almost 60 million people who live in approximately twenty four million households. It will ask 40 questions and generate 2 billion pieces of information to allocate more than £50 billion of public spending each year.

The Census is not only useful for planning. Two centuries of census taking have produced a record of remarkable changes in British society. For example, 90% of the population lived in urban areas in 1991 compared with just 16% in 1831. The average size of households has fallen by half in the past 100 years from 4.6 persons in 1901 to approximately 2.4 persons in 1991. We are also living longer. In 1821 almost half of the population was under 20 years of age compared with just over a quarter under 20 years of age today.

The value of the Census is that it provides detailed information at a local as well as a national level. This pamphlet - one of a series for various areas in England and for Wales - describes the changes in society measured by the Census between 1801 and 1991.

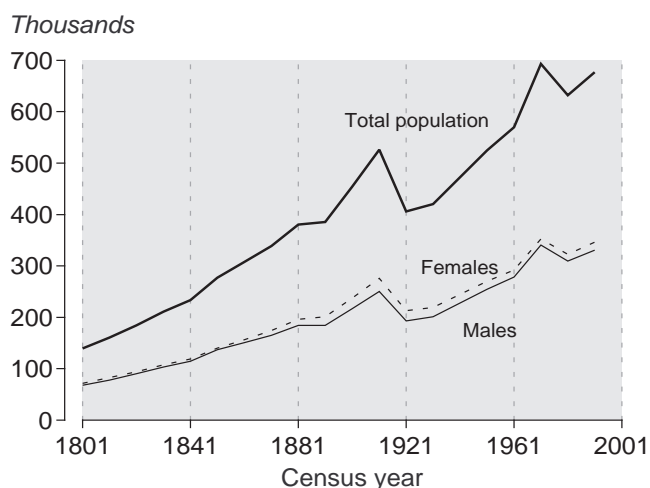
The information from censuses has continued to evolve and grow since the first reports in 1801. The questions and results are on issues relevant to a particular time and change cannot always be tracked exactly over the two centuries. Boundaries of counties also shift over time. The figures and graphs in this pamphlet are the best approximation in the circumstances and are to help paint the picture of change. A full list of the topics covered in the census since 1801 is available in an accompanying document 'Census Topics 1801-2001', and details on how to obtain further information on historical census statistics are given on the back page of this monitor.

# THE POPULATION AND AREA SIZE OF WORCESTERSHIRE

This table and chart show the various increases and decreases in area size and population, and numbers of males and females. The 1974 Local Government Re-organisation combined Worcestershire with Herefordshire to form one county for the 1981 and 1991 censuses. At the same time, some of what had previously been Worcestershire became the West Midlands.

Year	Area Size (Acres)	Total Population	Males	Females
1801	na	139,333	67,631	71,702
1811	na	160,546	78,033	82,513
1821	na	184,424	90,259	94,165
1831	459,710	211,365	103,383	107,982
1841	459,710	233,484	114,753	118,731
1851	472,165	276,926	136,956	139,970
1861	472,165	307,397	150,997	156,400
1871	472,453	338,837	164,732	174,105
1881	472,453	380,283	184,205	196,078
1891	480,302	385,309	184,180	201,129
1901	480,059	453,734	216,680	237,054
1911	479,218	526,087	250,446	275,641
1921	458,352	405,842	192,938	212,904
1931	447,678	420,056	201,115	218,941
1951	447,943	524,783	254,607	270,176
1961	447,943	569,957	278,046	291,911
1971	450,535	693,253	340,645	352,608
1981	970,238	631,756	309,454	322,302
1991	969,487	676,747	330,646	346,1010

na = not available



## Households and Amenities

At the end of the Second World War (1939-45) it was vital to assess the overall housing situation in Great Britain. Consequently the 1951 Census had a number of questions on housing needs. These were met in the post-war housing programmes, and significant improvements were evident in subsequent Censuses. In 1971 only 3,375 households in Worcestershire were without a WC, compared to 16,586 households in 1951. By 1981, only 5,083 households were without a fixed bath.

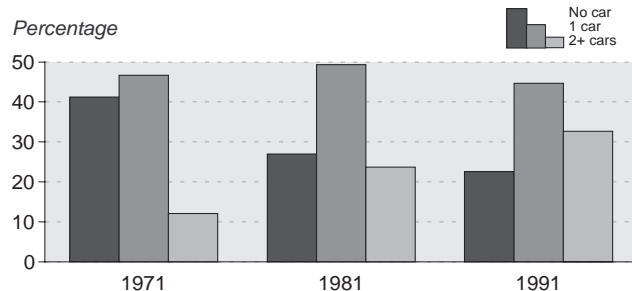
The 2001 Census will ask questions relevant now, such as availability of central heating and the lowest floor level of accommodation.

Amenities	1951	H/Holds %
H/Holds without piped water	18,642	12.2
H/Holds without WC	16,586	10.9
H/Holds without fixed bath	58,708	38.5
H/Holds without kitchen sink	10,887	7.1
H/Holds without cooking stove	4,021	2.6
H/Holds with all five of the above.	80,671	52.8

(Total Households in 1951 = 152,678)

## Car Availability 1971 – 1991

A question on car availability was asked for the first time in 1971, by which time almost 60 per cent of households in Worcestershire already had a car. At the time of the 1991 Census this had increased by a further 17 percentage points to over three-quarters of households (77%). There has also been a big increase in households with two or more cars since 1971.



# OCCUPATIONS

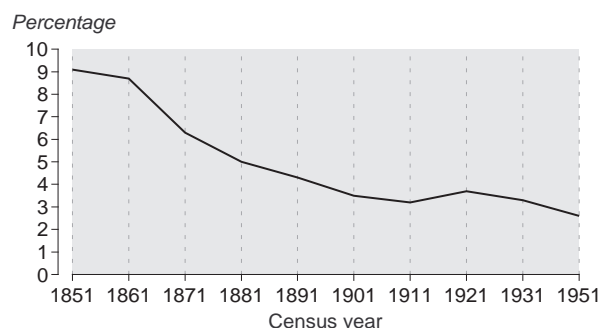
## Agriculture

A general decline in the number of people employed in agriculture is common to many counties. In Worcestershire the number of agricultural labourers fell from 16,679 in 1861 to 8,970 in 1931, a decrease of around 46%.

By 1991, the number of farmers and agricultural labourers accounted for less than 2% of the population of Hereford and Worcester.

*N.B.* This analysis is based upon the number of people employed in agriculture as a percentage of the total population, not just the working population.

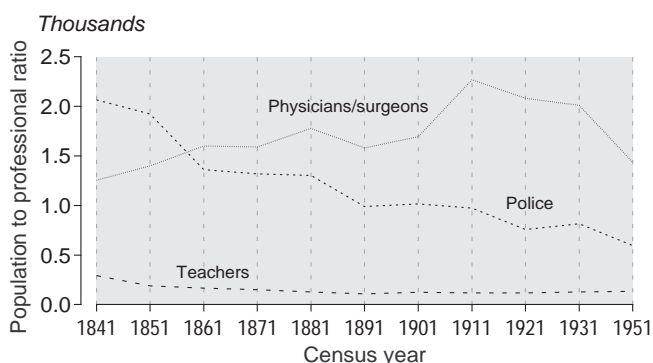
Percentage of people employed in agriculture in Worcestershire



## Professionals

This chart is based on a comparison between three professional occupations (physicians/surgeons, teachers and the police), and the total population of Worcestershire, 1841-1951.

There have been changes in definition in what is included in each of these professions over the years. For example, in 1841 'Police' included watchmen



who were paid for 'guarding the gates' and patrolling the streets at night. Early figures for physicians and surgeons may also be overstated as they included people employed in 'apothecary' (chemists) and medical students.

The number of people per physician/surgeon appears to have risen and fallen, whilst the numbers of people per policeman/woman and teacher has fallen. For example, there was one police officer per 1,923 people in 1851, dropping to 595 people in 1951.

By 1991, there was one teacher per 61 people, one physician/surgeon per 705 people and one police officer per 382 people.

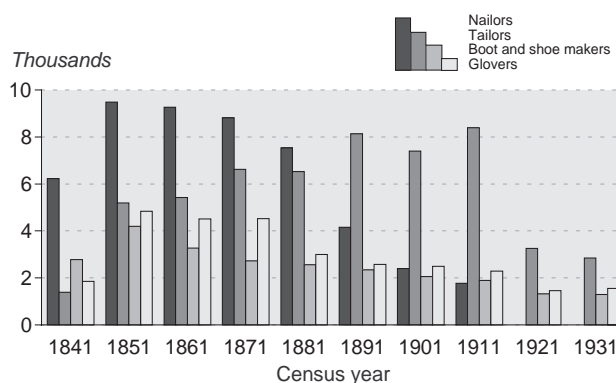
*N.B.* Figures between 1951 and 1991 have not been included due to problems with the availability and comparability of data between these years.

## Key Occupations

The chart highlights four of the main occupations in Worcestershire, past and present, and trends over the years.

The graph clearly shows that the number of nailors peaked in 1851 at close to 10,000 people and declined from that point onwards. The number of tailors rose through 1841 to 1911 and then declined sharply. Meanwhile, the numbers of boot and shoemakers and glovers both rose during the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and then declined.

*N.B.* There is no occupational data specifically on 'nailors' after 1911.



*N.B.* Analyses are only shown to 1931 because of difficulties in making comparisons with more recent statistics.

## Did you know ?

- The population of Worcestershire increased over five-fold between 1801 to 1971.
- In 1991, one in six households in Hereford and Worcester did not have central heating, which compared to a GB average of one in five.
- Between 1851 and 1901, the number of people employed on the railways in Worcestershire (excluding construction) increased over three-fold – from 223 people to 743 people.
- In 1881, 5% of Worcestershire's female population were employed as indoor domestic servants. Around 7 times as many females were domestic servants as males.
- In 1851, there were 2 chimney sweeps aged between 5 and 9 in Worcestershire.
- In 1891 there were 2,761 grocers in Worcestershire.
- There was a rise in the population density of Worcestershire from 0.5 people per acre in 1831, to 0.7 people per acre in 1991. This was below the GB average of almost 1 person per acre in 1991.
- The numbers of people per household has decreased over the last 200 years. In 1801 the average household in Worcestershire contained 5 people, compared to 2.5 in 1991, which matched the 1991 GB average of people per household.

## The Census reports also contain interesting explanatory notes:

1821 – *“The increase of population in Tardebigg Parish is ascribed to the thriving manufacture of needles and fishing hooks at Redditch.”*

1841 – *“In the return for the County of Worcester 28 males and 22 females are stated to have emigrated to the Colonies and Foreign Countries.”*

1851 – *“There are 1,467 persons enumerated as ‘paupers living in the workhouse’, of which 86 males and 71 females are under 5 years of age.”*

## Further information

These monitors have been produced to show county level information. Often, there is more interest in information for lower geographical areas e.g. parishes. Many good reference libraries hold census volumes to enable individuals to carry out their own research. The ONS London library (details below) which is open to the public also contains a full set of census volumes back to 1801. From 10<sup>th</sup> March 2001 there will be additional information made available on our website [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk). Further advice and limited research can be also carried out by Census Customer Services.

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